



# Asia-Pacific Counter-IED Fusion Center

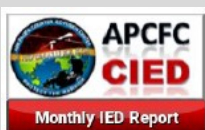
## Monthly IED Activity Report



DOI: 31 January 2019

### About the APCFC

The Asia-Pacific C-IED Fusion Center is the premier center for irregular warfare analysis in the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. The center develops and synchronizes C-IED and EOD programs and regional engagements. The center re-sources USARAPC C-IED training to ensure U.S., Allied, and Partner Nations survivability.



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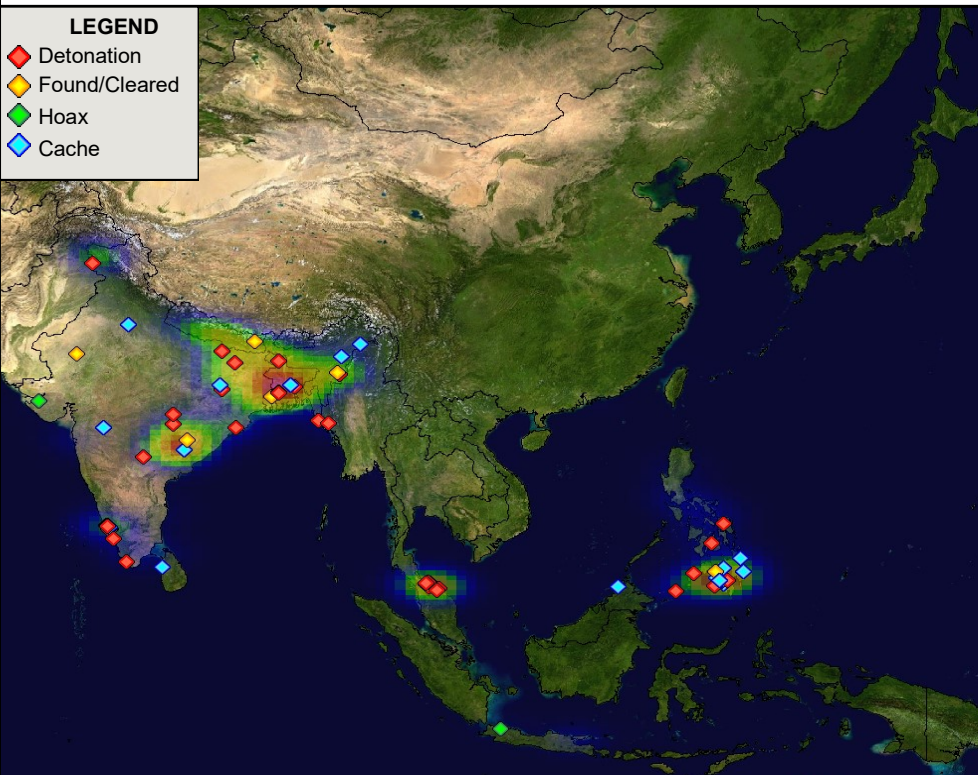
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Click on an entry to advance to the associated page.

### Month at a Glance — January

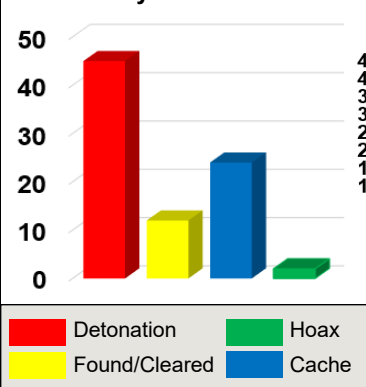
The Indo-Pacific region experienced 83 IED events in January: 52 events in South Asia, 31 events in South East Asia, and zero events in Northeast Asia. These events consisted of 193 devices. There were 45 IED detonation events, 12 IED found and cleared events, two IED hoax events, and 24 IED cache events. There were 199 casualties in January: 14 civilians killed, 135 civilians wounded, 10 host nation forces killed, and 40 host nation forces wounded.

### There were 83 IED events in the Indo-Pacific region in January 2019

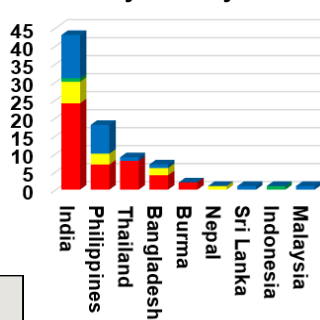


Icons depict events for January 2019; heat map depicts event density from January 2018 - January 2019

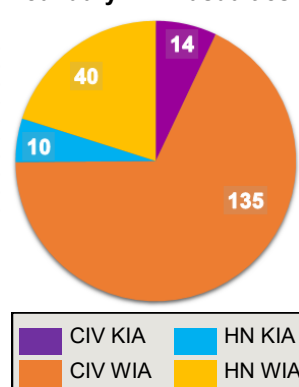
#### January IED events



#### January IED events by Country



#### January IED Casualties



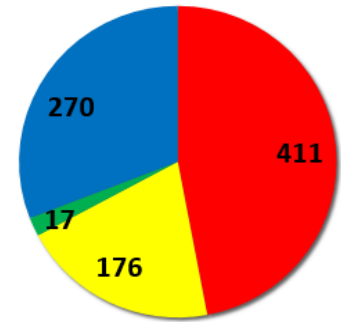
*This document is intended for those personnel performing military, intelligence, law enforcement, or security duties in support of C-IED operations.*

# January Executive Summary

## SOUTH ASIA

IED activity dropped in January as compared to December (52 events versus 77 events). Casualties in South Asia decreased by 75% in January (26 casualties versus 103 casualties), and device counts were 49% lower in January as compared to December (155 devices versus 302 devices). These decreases were primarily due to a reduction of events in Bangladesh following the conclusion of the 30 DEC 2018 elections. Despite the overall decrease in events regionally, events in India increased in January due to attacks and threats against Republic Day celebrations. Additionally, IED activity remains elevated in Jammu and Kashmir. For the first time since October 2018, Sri Lanka had an IED event, which was a large cache of explosives and detonators. In the coming months, it is probable that IED activity in India will remain elevated due to upcoming National elections.

South Asia IED Events  
January 2018-January 2019

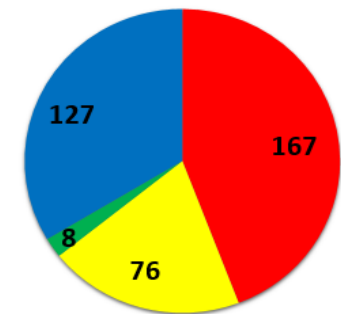


		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	60	16	1	78	155
	Year	810	619	27	2027	3483
Event Count	Month	28	9	1	14	52
	Year	411	176	17	270	874

## SOUTHEAST ASIA

IED activity in January increased slightly as compared to December (31 events versus 27 events), but device counts decreased by almost half in January (31 devices versus 60 devices). Casualties in Southeast Asia increased by 66% in January (173 casualties versus 59 casualties). This steep increase was due to the 27 JAN church bombing in Jolo, Philippines, in which suspected Islamists detonated multiple IEDs at a Catholic church, killing at least 21 and wounding approximately 111 civilians. Casualties in Thailand also doubled in January from the previous month, primarily due to an 8 JAN VBIED attack on a border police task force base and several attacks that injured security forces and civilians in the Deep South. In the coming months, IED activity could increase in Thailand ahead of the National Elections.

Southeast Asia IED Events  
January 2018-January 2019

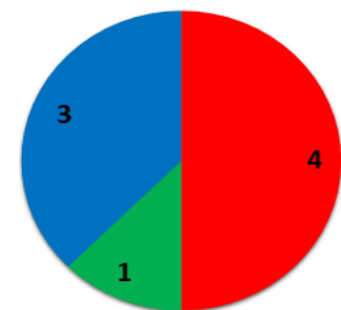


		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	19	3	1	15	38
	Year	196	145	7	395	743
Event Count	Month	17	3	1	10	31
	Year	167	76	8	127	378

## NORTHEAST ASIA

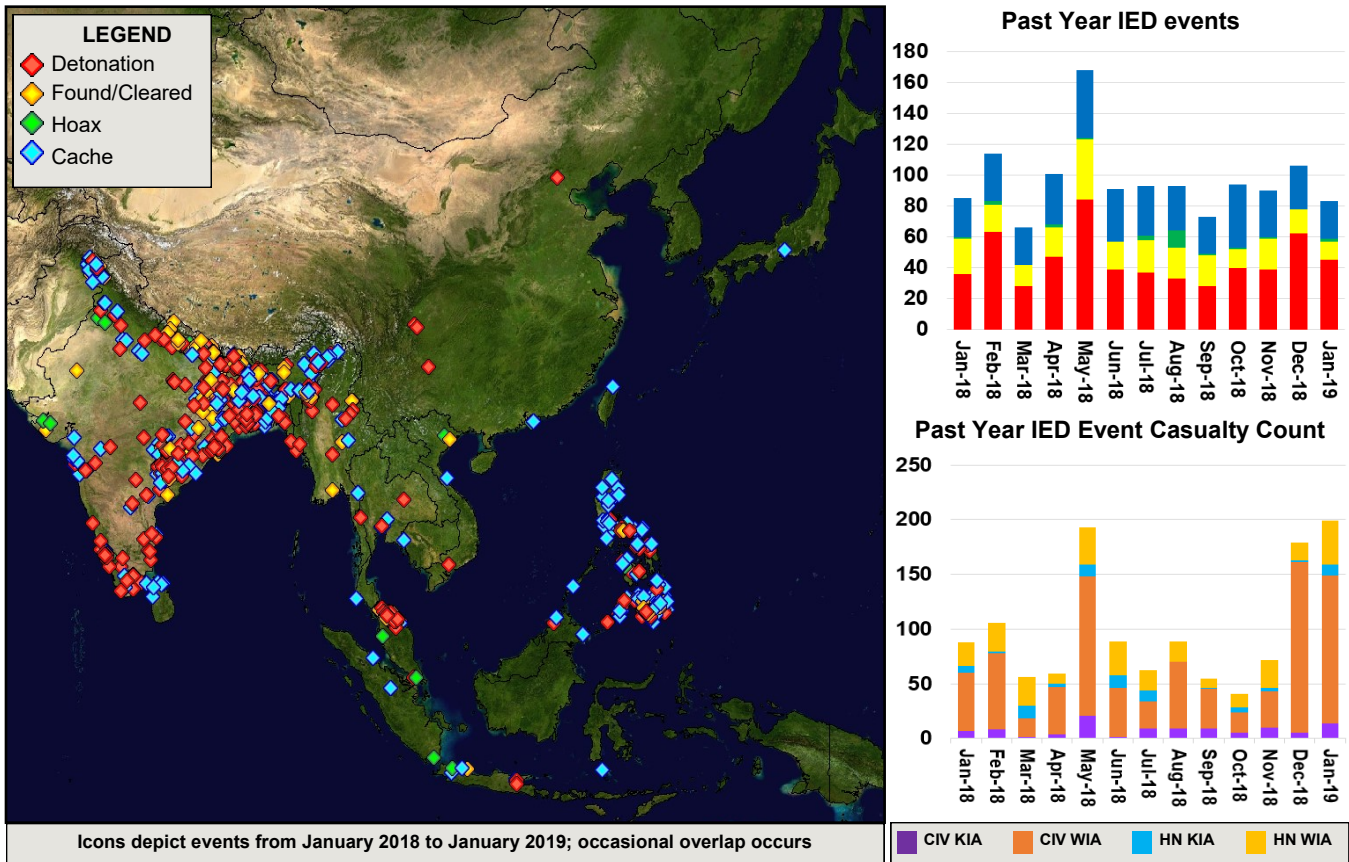
While there was no IED activity in Northeast Asia this month, there was an increase in incidents related to fireworks due to the Lunar New Year. In Hong Kong, police recovered a commercial cache containing 1.1 million tons of smuggled fireworks. In Taiwan, an individual blew off his hand after mishandling an aerial firework.

Northeast Asia IED Events  
January 2018-January 2019

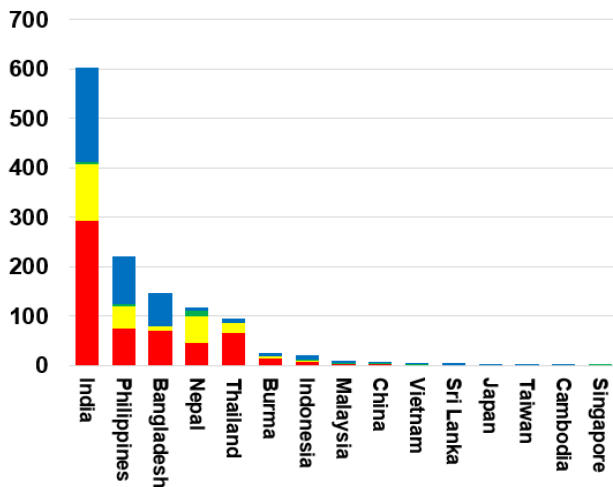


*IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from OPEN SOURCES are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations. Event refers to specific IED activity categories: IED Detonation, IED Found/Cleared, IED Hoax, IED Cache.*

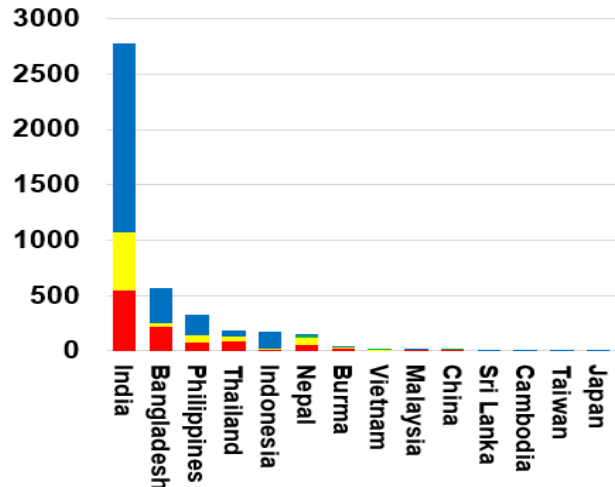
# PACOM IED Events - Past 12 Months



Past Year IED events by Country



Past Year Device Count by Country

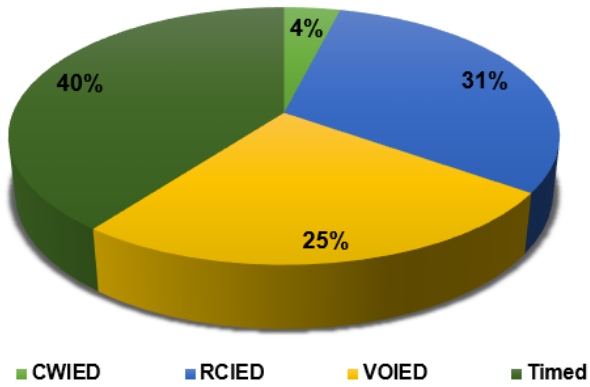


		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	79	19	2	93	193
	Year	1010	764	35	2424	4233
Event Count	Month	45	12	2	24	83
	Year	582	252	26	400	1260

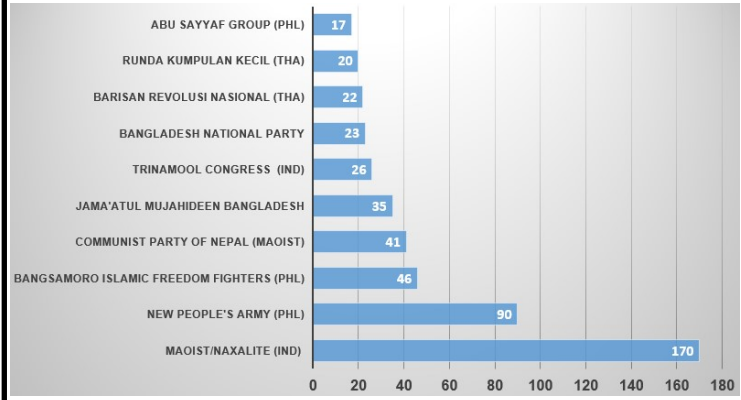
**NOTE:** The APCFC Monthly IED report includes both event counts (detonation, found/cleared, hoax, and cache) and device counts. It is important to note that a singular IED event may include multiple devices. For instance, a single IED cache event may contain several devices.

# IED Activity - Past 12 Months

## Switch Type



## Group Affiliation



*IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics are presumed to be approximations. Graphics represent known switch type and group affiliation.*



## Incident Highlight: Jolo Church Bombing

On 27 JAN, two IEDs detonated at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Sulu, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), Jolo, killing 21 and wounding approximately 111. The first detonation, likely an RCIED that incorporated a pipe packed with ammonium nitrate fuel oil, occurred inside the church at 0815. Approximately one minute later, a second IED detonated outside the cathedral near the church parking lot (the perpetrators likely emplaced this device in the utility box of a motorcycle). Investigators recovered fragments of steel pipe and parts of two cellular telephones during the post-blast investigation. Days after the attack, five ASG members surrendered to authorities; four of the detained suspects provided clarifying information that revealed Kammah Pae (the primary suspect) escorted an Indonesian husband and wife couple carrying a device into the church, which they possibly concealed in a backpack or in clothing. The assessed intended targets were churchgoers and AFP soldiers who were posting security near the church.

Philippine security forces originally identified the Ajang-Ajang faction of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) as the likely perpetrators due to similar attack signatures and known ASG TTPs (i.e. use of radio-controlled devices, ammonium nitrate explosives, and pipe bombs). The post-blast investigation, statements provided by witnesses, and the accounts given by the ASG members suggest that this was a suicide attack perpetrated by the Indonesian husband and wife. There is currently no public knowledge of the Indonesian couples' identities, to include their names or photographs; however, it is likely that identification will occur via ongoing DNA testing of unclaimed body parts recovered from the church.



**Views of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Mount Carmel after the attack**

ISIS was quick to claim responsibility for the attack; however, the organization's statements provided via its Amaq News Agency contained inaccurate tactical and technical characterizations of the event. Nonetheless, there may be some validity to ISIS's claim of responsibility, particularly as Philippine officials implicated ASG sub-leader, Hatib Sawadjaan, as the mastermind and financier behind this attack. Sawadjaan has known ties to ISIS affiliates; however, it is not clear if ISIS has recognized his leadership.

The motivation for this attack is likely a confluence of factors. Initially, Philippine security officials remarked that the primary suspect, Kammah Pae, likely facilitated the bombing to avenge the death of his brother, Surakah Ingog, an ASG sub-leader who Philippine security forces killed in AUG 2018. More recently, officials suggested that Islamists intended to use this bombing to provoke sectarian conflict and inspire recruits. Although militants have targeted this cathedral twice before in 2010 with rifle grenades, the damage was not as catastrophic. Religious sites are not a common target in the Philippines with only 10 IED events recorded since 2015.

There are several important themes related to this event. First is the use of foreign fighters to execute a suicide attack. This is the second suicide attack initiated by foreign fighters linked to ISIS that has occurred in the southern Philippines (an ISIS-affiliated Moroccan was responsible for the first event on 31 JUL 18 in Basilan). It is not a cultural norm for Filipinos to conduct martyrdom, which is why only foreigners have executed suicide attacks in the Philippines. The widespread publicity that



**President Duterte visiting the church after the bombing**

both suicide attacks have received, combined with their recognition by ISIS, will likely reinforce the perceptions of aspiring foreign jihadists that the southern Philippines is a worthy location to continue and to foster increased militant activity, which includes martyrdom operations.

Second, this event involved an Indonesian husband and wife couple, similar to the MAY 18 Surabaya attacks in Indonesia, which involved three Indonesian families participating in suicide bombing attacks against churches and police stations. The Surabaya attacks were the first time families conducted suicide bombing operations in Indonesia. However, the employment of child suicide bombers was controversial within the Indonesian jihadist community, raising doubts regarding the use of this tactic. While the Jolo bombing was different in one key aspect from Surabaya (no involvement of the couple's children), the continued use of a family unit to implement a coordinated suicide operation could indicate the start of a new trend for Indonesian jihadists.

**Sources:** Aljazeera (1/27/19) Defense Post (1/27/19) NYTIMES (1/27/19) ABS CBN (1/28/19) UPI (1/28/19) Straights Times (1/28/19) PTV (1/28/19) NYT (1/28/19) Rappler (2/4/19) Straits Times (2/4/19) Arab News (2/5/19)

## Incident Highlight: India's Raids Prevent Terror

On 23 JAN, the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) arrested nine people from five locations in Maharashtra State on suspicion of planning terror attacks targeting India's Republic Day (26 JAN) and the Hindu festival Kumbh Mela (15 JAN). These arrests came after several weeks of surveillance and are the third such in a series of raids Indian authorities conducted since December 2018 on ISIS-inspired organizations. The nine arrested on 23 JAN, who had dubbed themselves Ummat-e-Mohammadiya, include a pharmacist, two engineers, and a science student, as well as the son of a known member of Dawood Ibrahim's crime syndicate. The ATS is investigating possible links of the group to Ibrahim's crime network.

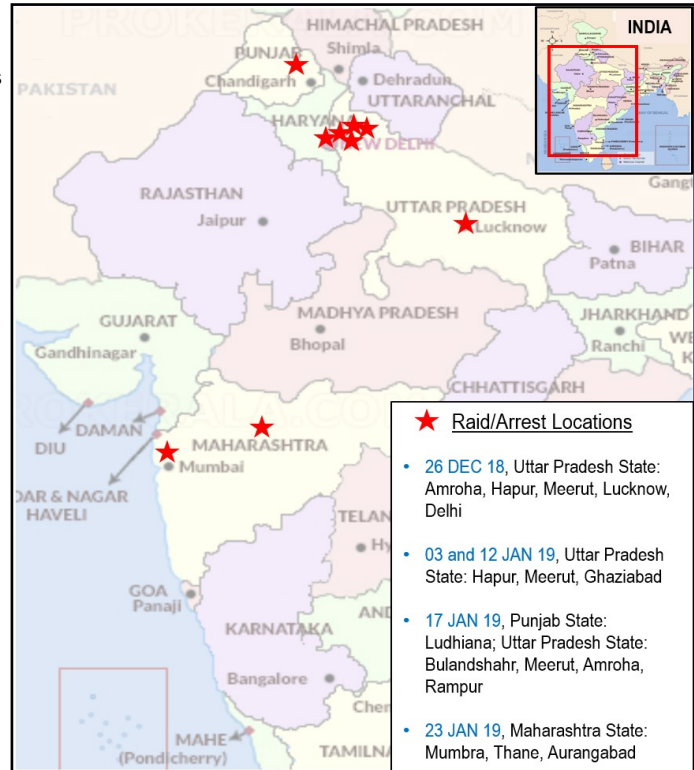
The ATS determined that the group planned to poison water and food sources. According to statements from the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh and ATS, militants were targeting the river Ganga (also known as the Ganges – a Hindu sacred river), as well as water and food sources in areas of large public gatherings at Republic Day festivities and the Kumbh Mela festival. Authorities are also investigating if there was any link between the cell's plans and a recently released ISIS video that calls to poison the river Ganga.

At least one member of the group has been in contact with an ISIS operative that is likely located outside of India. Once the planning matured and ATS investigators determined that Republic Day was the likely time for the attacks, they conducted the raids, in which ATS found several types of chemical liquids and powders, including glycerin, urea, acetone, hydrogen peroxide, acid bottles, as well as cell phones, hard drives, SIM cards, and knives. ATS believes the cell was experimenting with the various chemicals to determine which would work for their plans to poison water and food. Such an attack has the potential to affect millions of civilians. The Kumbh festival alone annually attracts over 150 million people during its eight-week duration. Investigations are ongoing, as some of the chemicals are not identifiable by ATS.

The raids netted a trove of suspicious materials, including a homemade rocket launcher, over 100 cell phones and SIM cards, laptops, material for suicide vests, potassium nitrate, ammonium nitrate, over 100 alarm clocks, wireless doorbells, car fobs, steel containers, 51 pipes, and ISIS-related literature. Altogether, authorities arrested 21 suspects in December 2018 and January 2019 in three states and Delhi. The detained are reportedly members of Harkat-ul-Islam, an ISIS-inspired VEO, that authorities say was planning suicide attacks and serial IED detonations targeting government officials and locations with crowds of people. The alleged mastermind, Mufti Mohammad Suhail, and the cell's alleged arms supplier, a 21-year old named Naeem, were among those arrested. According to the Indian National Intelligence Agency, they were in an advanced stage of assembling RCIEDs, pipe bombs, and suicide vests.



Hindu adherents celebrating the Kumbh Mela festival by the Ganges River



Raid and Arrest Locations: December 2018 to January 2019

The Afghanistan ISIS wing, ISIS-Khorasan, has also declared Kashmir a target to wage jihad. Prior to their arrests, two of the arrested cell associates of Naeem visited Jammu and Kashmir three times between May and August of last year, and police have charged them with planning terror acts in this region. Indian authorities are cognizant of how ISIS can spread its ideology online, whether through direct recruiting or through inspiration. This fact puts the series of raids in India over the last few months in perspective, despite the small size of the cells involved.

Sources: Dailyo (1/24/19) India News (1/25/18) Hindustan Times (1/17/19) News 18 (1/24/19) News 18 (1/5/18) Hindustan Times (12/31/18) The Statesman (1/17/19)

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# Special Assessment: China's Evolving Security Interests in Syria

## Connecting Domestic Anti-Terrorism Policy and Foreign-Based Chinese Extremists

The Chinese Communist Central Party (CCP) seeks to expand economic and political interests westward over land and maritime corridors as part of its national rejuvenation strategic plan. China's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR), home of ethnic Uighur Muslims (the term 'Uighur' refers to the Turkic, predominantly Muslim people who are concentrated in Xinjiang), is key terrain for these plans and is a region that figures prominently in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) trade routes. Juxtaposed with a need for security and stability of China's near-abroad in Central Asia is the threat from a potential rise of Uighur extremism. Safe trade routes are critical to the economic success of BRI and CPEC, suggesting a need to reduce any perceived unrest or threats from extremists or separatists in these areas.

China has instigated a series of policies over the last decade, to include a new terrorism law in 2016, a new policy on the exercise of religious freedoms in 2018, and new crackdowns on Muslim ethnic groups (particularly Uighurs). These policies, along with the strengthening of military, police, and Central Communist Party controls via the "Strike Hard Campaign against Violent Terrorism" that began in 2014, have made it possible to affect a thorough repression of the Uighur population in XUAR, to the extent that the government has sent potentially one tenth of the total Uighur population (some one million people) to mandatory "reeducation" camps. The press has reported on additional, draconian social measures imposed by the government, which will likely not abate despite international condemnation. Ostensibly, China is aggravating an already tenuous situation, as these repressive measures are likely to foment distrust and incite rebellion. In addition to this internal threat, China appears focused on the external threat in the shape of Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP) forces acting freely in Syria, concerned by the prospect of elevated militancy precipitated by Uighur extremists developing and enhancing their militant expertise.

### China's Uighur Problem – Local and Global

The Uighur ethnic population in XUAR has a long history of what the Chinese press terms as "restive," in regards to the population's interactions and sentiments directed toward the majority ethnic Han Chinese government and the CCP. The Uighurs are ethnically Turkish and have sought to form an "East Turkestan" that is independent from China. In the past two decades, there have been several violent outbursts and attacks by Uighurs in protest of social repression. In pursuit of a separatist agenda, the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) and its successor organization, the TIP, have carried out sporadic, but violent, attacks both in China and abroad. Chinese authorities adhere to what President Xi terms the "three evils" that pose threats to China's peace and stability: terrorism, religious extremism, and separatism. Through its policies and actions, it is apparent that the Chinese government deems that the Uighurs represent a threat from all three of these categories. It follows that Chinese authorities have sought to reduce or eliminate any display of religious or Uighur ethnic pride or solidarity. This effort starts "at home" in XUAR, but also extends to the Uighur diaspora, and those Uighurs who attempt to emigrate. China assumes that societal repression will discourage the rise of extremism and its "related evil," terrorism. China does not stop at its borders in these control efforts, but reaches out to diaspora populations and to regional governments in the hopes that they can extradite Uighurs back to XUAR. In this manner, the CCP envisions the elimination of the TIP and the elimination of extremist ideologies within its borders.



What would compel China to involve itself directly in Syria's civil war, either in support of the Assad regime, or in an independent effort to combat Uighur jihadist groups currently operating in Syria? A close examination of the 2015 Chinese White Paper, China's Military Strategy reveals a roadmap for the rejuvenation tasks that the PLA will carry out between now and 2049 (the century mark of the Peoples Republic of China and Xi's stated date by which China will have a world-class military and a global national presence). Three key strategic focus areas for China, as outlined in 2015 are national unification, territorial integrity, and development interests. Examining China's threat perceptions through a lens of these focus areas, the Defense Intelligence Agency's paper, China Military Power (2018), finds, "Beijing's primary threat perceptions include sovereignty and domestic security issues that it believes could undermine the overriding strategic objective to perpetuate communist rule." Simply stated, the danger from Syrian-based Uighur jihadists is a significant threat that requires steadfast action, particularly as China recognizes the potential for Uighur jihadists to return to China from Syria to wage jihad against the Chinese authorities in support of Uighur autonomy.

### China's Evolving Presence in Syria

Perhaps because of these perceived external threats to Chinese sovereignty, Chinese authorities have spoken of deploying troops to Syria to support the Syrian effort to eliminate TIP and other opposition forces. Unconfirmed reports

## Special Assessment: China's Evolving Security Interests in Syria

have surfaced of the PLA's "Night Tigers," a Special Forces team that deployed to the Syrian port city of Tartarus in November 2017 (officially denied by China). China's Ambassador to Syria stated to the press in August 2018 that, "the Chinese military would be willing to participate in some way in the campaign in Idlib or in other parts of the country... and...there is positive military cooperation between China and Syria in the domain of counterterrorism." Should China directly involve itself with ground forces in Syria under the auspices of defeating Uighur extremists, it will further complicate the already complex Syrian battlespace and possibly create international tensions. The rationale for sending ground forces to Syria may satisfy other geo-political goals of China, such as providing operational experience for its military, which the government will use to provide security to developing economic and trade corridors through central Asia westward to Africa and Europe.

China is well into its long-term strategic goal of national rejuvenation, part of which involves making the PLA a world-class military with an expeditionary reach and a foreign operational capacity. Since 2012, Xi has worked to expand the scope, capabilities, and reach of the PLA, to include the establishment of China's first foreign base in Djibouti. This expansion of military capabilities seeks to address perceived threats to China's periphery, to secure its expanding trade and economic interests along the BRI and the CPEC corridors, and to mitigate the possible rise of domestic separatist movements from ethnic minorities like the Uighurs and Tibetans.

Xi has also expanded the scope and ambition of PLA modernization, clearly affirming the PLA's overseas role and providing the institutional framework to enable substantial military growth beyond the PLA's traditional security threats...Xi's vision for the PLA constitutes a logical outgrowth of CCP instructions to the PLA since 2004 to protect China's expanding 'development interests' at home and abroad.

– From *China Military Power*, DIA, 2018

For the great nation that Xi aspires to make of China, problems such as ethnic separatism, terrorism, and extremism are threats that the Chinese would prefer to contend with outside of national borders. As such, the potential for Chinese extremists to travel abroad to wage jihad and to return to China armed with an increased knowledge of militant tactics serves as a significant motivator for Chinese military involvement in Syria. This includes the deployment of combat forces, as well as military enablers such as intelligence and sustainment capabilities.

Regional terrorism, separatism, and extremism are rampant. All these have a negative impact on the security and stability along China's periphery...China faces a formidable task to maintain political security and social stability. Separatist forces for 'East Turkestan independence' and 'Tibet independence' have inflicted serious damage particularly with escalating violent terrorist activities by East Turkestan independence forces.

– *China Military Power* DIA, 2018, quoted from China's 2015 paper, *China's Military Strategy*

China also likely seeks to secure lucrative post-war Syrian reconstruction opportunities. As of August 2018, Xi has announced USD 23 billion in Chinese loans and USD 90 million in humanitarian aid to Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, and Jordan collectively. Prior to this, China assured Syria of infrastructure development and announced that the Chinese telecommunications giant, Huawei, would be available to reconstitute Syria's telecommunications grid. In addition, China has examined increasing the depth and capacity of Mediterranean ports and constructing new rail lines into Syria. Access to a Mediterranean port (Tripoli or Tartarus) would be of strategic benefit for China's PLA Navy, and would emerge as a key node in the BRI.

China sees both threat and opportunity in the Syrian civil war. In terms of neutralizing the threat of Chinese ethnic Uighur jihadists in Syria before they can return to China to create terror and ignite separatist movements, China likely sees a compelling need to send ground forces and offer intelligence and logistics capabilities in support of Bashar Assad's regime. China also stands to gain valuable counter-terrorism experience for the PLA by participating in counter-terrorism and offensive operations in Syria. Separately, China also likely views a threat to its sovereignty and its long-term economic programs associated with a protracted conflict. The survival and return of TIP members to China could inspire other global VEOs to rally around TIP's Uighur cause and bring jihadism to China. A strong and experienced VEO threat operating on Chinese territory would tarnish China's desired image of a rising, global power. Lastly, China views opportunity in being "on the ground" at the end of hostilities in Syria, to emerge as an early reconstruction partner and to secure important economic corridors through Syria to the Mediterranean and beyond.

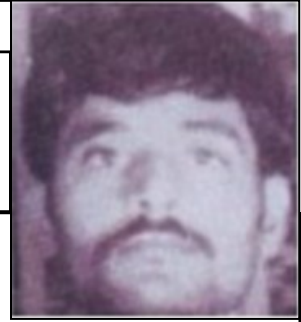
**Sources:** The Diplomat (8/20/18) War on the Rocks (1/25/19) The Diplomat (8/17/16) War on the Rocks (1/14/19) MEMRI (8/9/18) Albawaba (12/7/17) Albawaba (8/12/18) Long War Journal (7/10/18) Defense Intelligence Agency, DIA-02-1706-085 (11/1/18) RSIS (1/1/19) Asia Times (9/13/18) Asia Times (1/3/19) South China Morning Post (10/14/18) East Asia Forum (6/18/18) Asia Times (10/3/18)



# Person of Interest / VEO of Interest

## POI: Nambala Keshav Rao

**ALIAS:** Basavraju, Gaganna, Prakash, Krishna, Vijay, Keshav, Basava Raju, BR, Darapu Narasimha Reddy **AGE:** 63 **AFFILIATION:** Central Committee of Communist Party of India – Maoist (CPI-M), Sri Lankan Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) **AREA OF OPERATIONS:** Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, and Bihar



For the first time in 25 years, the CPI-M has appointed a new leader, Nambala Keshav Rao. He has been a member and leader in the organization for 27 years. He is a university graduate with a degree in engineering, and analysts characterize him as well read, violent, aggressive, an expert in jungle warfare and IEDs. In November 2018, CPI-M publicly appointed Keshav Rao as the General Secretary, replacing Mupalla Lakshman Rao (alias Ganapathy), who stepped down due to health reasons.

During the 1980s, Keshav Rao and other founding members of the CPI-M reportedly received training from former LTTE operatives in military tactics and explosives handling. When several Communist militant groups merged into the CPI-M in the 1990s, Keshav Rao became the Secretary of the Central Military Commission. Between 2004 and 2018, Keshav Rao served as the CPI-M's Deputy Commander and continued to lead the Central Military Commission. He was also responsible for the operations of subordinate committees to the Central Military Commission such as the Special Area Military Committee, the Zonal Military Committee, and others. Keshav Rao directed guerrilla activity, developed strategy, and purchased the supply of arms for the CPI-M.

Indian security forces have directly associated Keshav Rao with the planning of violent attacks against security forces, politicians, and civilians. For example, in the last three months of 2018, Keshav Rao reportedly murdered two politicians from the Telugu Desam Party, and later torched several construction vehicles and civilian vehicles. Under Keshav Rao's leadership, the CPI-M will likely conduct more violent attacks and ambushes in the coming year within the Red Corridor. Discussions between Keshav Rao and former leader Lakshman Rao during 2017 also indicate that developing the second tier of CPI-M leadership is a priority.

**Sources:** First Post (11/6/18) One India (11/8/18) Hindustan Times (11/29/18) India Today (12/1/18)

## VEO: Arakan Army (AA)

**FOUNDED:** 10 APR 2009 **LEADER:** Major General Twan Mrat Naing **HEADQUARTERS:** Laiza, Kachin State **AREA:** Northern Shan, Rakhine, Kachin, Chin States **STRENGTH:** 7,000 **AFFILIATION:** United League of Arakan (ULA) and the Northern Alliance



The AA is a Buddhist ethno-separatist group established in Kachin State with the support of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA). The AA seeks to return to its homeland in Rakhine state (also known as Arakan) and to seek Rakhine independence. The AA's objectives include pursuing self-governance of the people of Arakan from Burman colonial rule, protecting the Arakanese cultural heritage, and acting in the best interests of the people of Arakan. Unlike the Muslim Rohingya of Rakhine, the Burmese government officially recognizes the Arakanese as an ethnic minority; however, like many small ethnic minorities in the country, the Arakanese feel marginalized.

Compared to other small, armed ethnic groups (AEGs), the AA is very well equipped and organized. The AA procures its arms and ammunition from the KIA and its ally, the United Wa State Army (UWSA), as well as from the black market, which exists along the border of Burma and Thailand. The group may also purchase weapons from the Kuki rebels on the Burmese-Indian border. The group also receives funding from affluent Arakanese who make substantial contributions to the AA; however, the Tatmadaw suspects the AA receives funding through activities such as drug smuggling; an accusation the group vehemently denies.

In Rakhine state, clashes between the AA and the Tatmadaw have been escalating continually since November 2018. Both sides have experienced casualties from the fighting, which has displaced approximately 4,500 civilians in the Buthidaung, Rathedaung, and Kyauk Taw townships. On 4 JAN, the AA conducted a coordinated attack on four police posts that killed 13 police officers and wounded nine others using AK series assault rifles, machine guns, and sniper rifles (see SEA SIGACTs). The AA is one of several AEGs that have not signed the nationwide cease-fire agreement (NCA). The Tatmadaw declared its first unilateral, four-month ceasefire in all conflict zones in north and northeast Burma except Rakhine, with the aim of rebuilding trust with AEGs who have not yet signed the NCA. Although the Tatmadaw's unilateral ceasefire is an attempt at peace and stability, the ongoing clashes with the AA undermine those efforts.

**Sources:** Asia Times (6/11/17) Radio Free Asia (12/14/18) Relief Web (1/8/19) The Irrawaddy (1/8/19) BNI Online (1/9/19)

# South Asia: January Significant Activity

## Bangladesh

Following the October and November detention of sixteen operatives posing as non-governmental organization (NGO) workers, Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Counter Terrorism Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit discovered that the operatives channeled USD 8.7 million in foreign aid to militant organizations, to include Jamaat-e-Islami (Jel). Eight of the operatives were members of the al-Qa'ida-aligned Ansar al-Islam (Ansarullah Bangla Team, ABT), and the other eight were employees of three other NGOs. **Daily Star (1/1/19)**

On 2 JAN, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan stated that Bangladesh has adopted a 'zero tolerance policy' towards militancy and has vowed to step up anti-militancy actions. The Director General of the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), Benazir Ahmed, echoed Khan's statements. He also stated that security forces conducted 93 anti-militancy drives, killing 58 militants and detaining 265 from 2013-2018. **Daily Star (1/3/19)**

On 15 JAN, the CTTC announced that they detained seven ABT members reportedly responsible for the murder of a magazine editor and a USAID staff member, Xulhaz Mannan, and his friend in 2016. The militants targeted Mannan through online social media forums before going to his apartment and murdering him. The seven were also responsible for wounding the apartment guard and a police officer who attempted to stop them. One suspect, who confessed to Mannan's killing, also indicated that former Bangladeshi Army Major Zia, the senior operational planner of ABT, provided guidance. The suspect alleged that Zia messaged him operational directives via a secure messaging application as recently as 6 JAN. ABT has targeted liberal bloggers, writers, and editors since 2013 for expressing views they see as counter to Islam or jihad. **Daily Star (1/16/19) Daily Star (1/25/19)**

In late January, RAB officials detained the final suspects involved in the 2016 Holey Artisan Bakery attack. JMB militants Mamunur Rashid (alias Ripon, 30) and Shariful Islam (alias Khaled, 27) had been absconding since the attack that left over 20 dead and a further 50 wounded. Six JMB militants involved in the attack are in custody, and security forces neutralized a further 13 militants since 2016. Islam, also accused in the murder of Rajshahi University professor AFM Rezaul Karim Siddique in 2016, reportedly had connections with Indian ISIS operative Abu Musa. **Daily Star (1/21/19) Daily Star (1/25/19) Dhaka Tribune (1/26/19)**

On 24 JAN, Bangladesh National Party (BNP) leaders announced they would not allow participation in any upcoming elections held under the Awami League-led government. They also stated they would not participate in any re-polling related to the 30 DEC 2018 National Election. The government has scheduled the next round of polls for 28 FEB, which will determine local leaders across 36 wards in Dhaka. **Dhaka Tribune (1/25/19)**

## India

In January 2019, security forces in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) went on high alert due to a series of eight grenade attacks reportedly carried out by Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) insurgents in attempts to disrupt Republic Day (26 JAN) events. Republic Day is the Indian national holiday commemorating the ratification of India's Constitution in 1950. The majority of the attacks targeted police and security forces throughout J&K, including police checkpoints, a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) bunker, and an Indian army camp in south Kashmir. The attacks reportedly injured one police officer. **News18 (1/18/29) The Hindu (01/25/19)**

On 2 JAN, violence broke out in the southern India state of Kerala, precipitated by two women entering the 800 year-old Sabarimala Temple in Kerala State; a Hindu temple that adherents believe that the admittance of childbearing-age women is a desecration. The temple's deity, Ayyappa, is known for his celibacy, and devotees believe women would be a distraction. The government changed the national laws in 2018 to permit entry into all Hindu temples by women between the ages of 10 and 50. Following, more than two dozen women tried unsuccessfully (blocked by protestors) from entering Sabarimala, but the successful entrance of two women under police escort on 2 JAN sparked a violent response from the community. Hindu activists called a statewide *hartal* (protest). Several days of protest resulted in the arrest of 10,560, 100 injured, and one killed and included several IEDs thrown at political figures' homes and police stations. Since the end of the strike, news reports confirm at least 10 women have entered the temple. The Indian Supreme Court has received petitions to reconsider its ruling and has agreed to a new hearing. **National Geographic (1/8/19) NDTV (1/7/19) FirstPost (1/11/19)**

On 19 JAN, New Delhi police arrested three suspected militants who were reportedly planning a possible terrorist attack in south India. One of the suspects was an Afghan national, Wali Mohammad (alleged sharp

# South Asia: January Significant Activity

shooter), while the other two suspects were Indian nationals. The alleged target was Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) leaders in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. RSS is an Indian right wing, Hindu nationalist, paramilitary volunteer organization that is widely regarded as the parent organization of the ruling party of India, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). **Times Now News (1/19/19)**

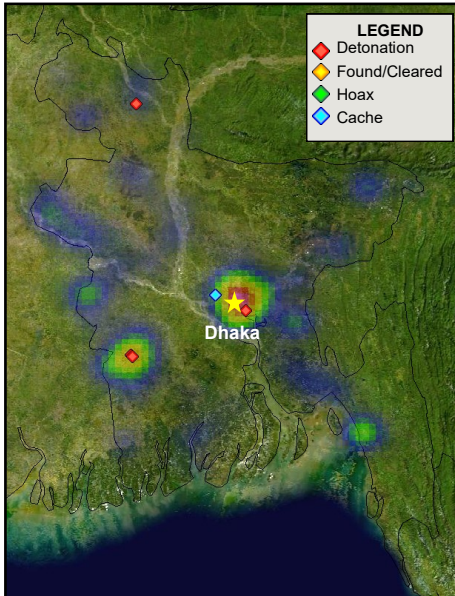
In Punjab, an Indian Army team visited the Bhakra Main Line canal after news reports of divers observed a large number of mortar rounds and other munitions below the water surface. Reported since 2003, this unexploded ordinance (UXO) apparently originated from combat zones in the Middle East and made its way to India via imports of scrap containers by steel companies in the area. Though the senior police officers in the area believed many were merely shell casings (spent rounds), the Indian Army investigators and dive team indicated to local police there were live mortar rounds and they should be removed and destroyed. However, the busy canal feeds into New Delhi and other urban areas, and to remove the thousands of mortars safely would require authorities to reduce the canal's water level. Thus, authorities have not removed the UXO and the number has increased over the years, as reported by local divers who say an estimated 10 truckloads of UXO are visible in five locations. There are several bridges, restaurants, and the Mandi Gobindgarh industrial hub near the canal area where thousands of tons (according to a 2017 survey by the Punjab State bomb disposal squad) of UXO lie underwater. **Times of India (1/11/19) Times of India (1/20/19)**

## Maldives

On 7 JAN, Maldives police announced they had launched an investigation into the online social media channel, "Murtad Watch," for hate speech and death threats. The channel reportedly listed individuals as apostates for having renounced Islam. This could lead to violence against the named personnel by radical elements, as Maldivian militants have targeted such individuals in the past. The channel started in November and reportedly had 121 subscribers when police began investigating it. **Maldives Independent (1/8/19)**



# Bangladesh: January IED Events



There were four IED detonation events, two IED found and cleared events, and one IED cache event.

On 2 JAN, one crude bomb detonated, injuring three children after they found it in a dustbin in Rasulpur, Fatullah, Narayanganj, Dhaka. Police found and cleared an additional three crude bombs following the detonation. **New Age BD (1/3/19)**

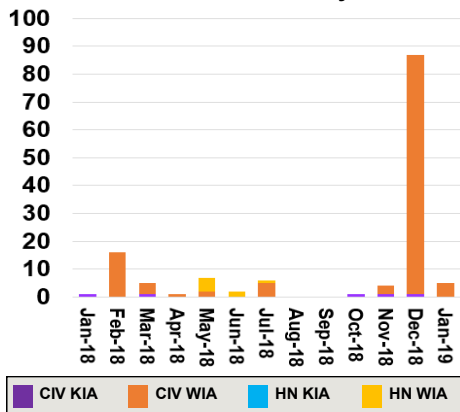
On 22 JAN, Rapid Action Battalion personnel recovered an IED cache and detained one suspect from a residence following a tip-off in Bhakum, Singair, Manikganj, Dhaka. The cache contained 10 crude bombs, four Molotov cocktails, one pistol, and two rounds of ammunition. Authorities connected the cache to a personal dispute. **Independent BD (1/22/19)**

On 27 JAN, 12 IEDs detonated at six locations in Jessore. All the detonations occurred at residences and businesses owned by Awami League and associated Jubo League/Chhatra League leaders. Following the detonations, authorities found and cleared additional IEDs and explosives at all of the locations. **BD News 24 (1/27/19) Daily Star (1/27/19) Dhaka Tribune (1/27/19) Daily Star (1/28/19)**

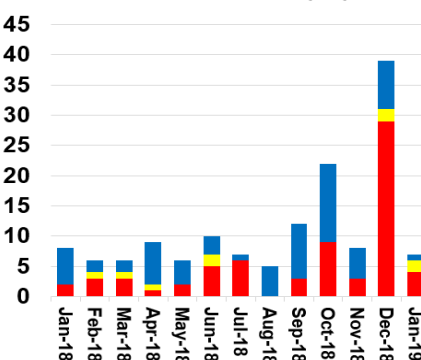
IED activity dropped in January to historically normal levels following the completion of the 30 DEC 2018 elections. Authorities connected at least one, but possibly two, of the January events to the election. In the coming months, IED violence may increase as the main opposition party, the BNP, indicated it would not participate in any further election activities, such as the upcoming local polls starting on 28 FEB (**see SA SIGACTs**). In the 2014 elections, the BNP's decision to boycott polls directly contributed to elevated levels of IED activity and violence.

		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	17	9	0	10	36
	Year	217	30	0	317	564
Event Count	Month	4	2	0	1	7
	Year	71	9	0	68	148

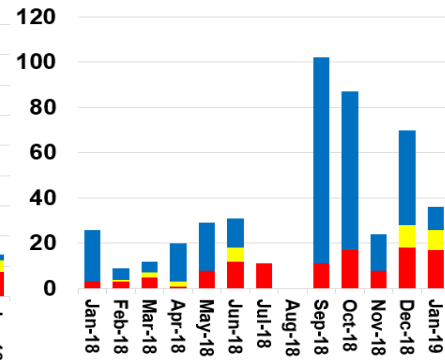
Past Year IED Event Casualty Count



Past Year IED Events by Type

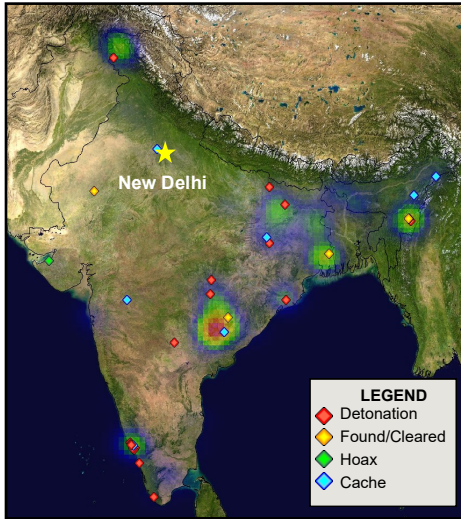


Past Year Devices



IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

# India: January IED Events



There were 24 IED detonation events, six IED found and cleared events, one hoax event, and 12 IED cache events.

On 11 JAN, Indian security forces recovered an IED cache in a forest in Jharkhand. Authorities suspect Maoist insurgents were storing the cache to use in attacks against patrolling security forces; a regular TTP in Maoist-populated Jharkhand. The cache contained 30 locally manufactured grenades, 9kg of explosive substances, 140 partly manufactured grenades, and materials for constructing grenades. **Devdiscourse (1/12/19)**

On 25 and 26 JAN, a series of four IED attacks occurred in the area of Imphal, Manipur. This was a coordinated attack targeting four locations around Imphal over two days with the objective of disrupting Republic Day events. The first attack on the evening of 25 JAN involved an IED detonation near Pamphel Power House. The subsequent three attacks were IED detonations on 26 JAN at Santa Market, Singjamei Wangma Thongkhong Kshetrileikai, and near the Border Roads Task Force (BRTF) camp. **E-PAO (1/30/19)**

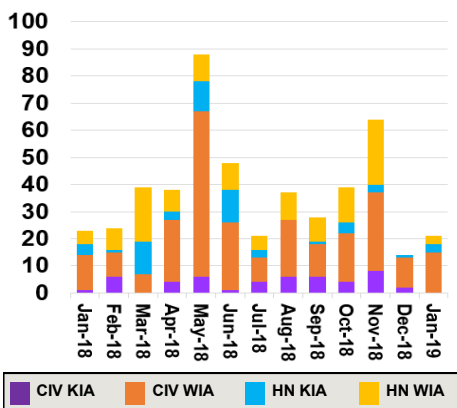
On 25 JAN, local police cleared a hoax IED in Jamnager, Gujarat, following a tip-off from a local resident. The hoax bomb was reportedly constructed of string, firecrackers, and an alarm clock. Police determined the device was harmless after close inspection by bomb squad personnel and a bomb-sniffing dog. **Times of India (1/26/19)**

Overall, IED activity remained moderate in January, despite India's Republic Day (26 JAN) and the large Kumbh Mela Hindu festivals occurring. Indian security forces' quick actions and investigations likely prevented a large increase in IED activity. VEOs announced a number of threats to the large public gatherings; in response, security forces issued warnings and publicized interdictions and prevention of attacks. Security forces and the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) intercepted several VEOs (some claiming affiliation with ISIS), such as cells of Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM), before they were able to carry out plans to detonate IEDs at public venues or against police forces.

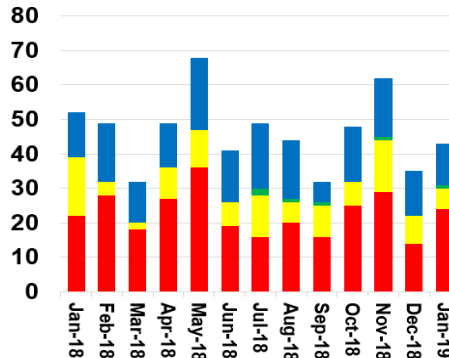
In Northern India, VEOs in Jammu and Kashmir lobbed grenades at police forces and at public venues in at least eight separate events in an attempt to disrupt Republic Day and as a statement of protest against India's national constitution ratification in 1950. Other VEOs also protested/boycotted the Republic Day celebration in Manipur State, with a series of IED detonations emplaced by the separatist group, People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK). The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) in Maharashtra State intercepted a cell of Harkat-ul-e-Islam that was planning to attack the Kumbh festival and other public celebrations with poison (see India Incident Highlight). Violence related to State celebrations or national activities occurs commonly in India, and the next large event will be the national elections in April 2019; political violence, to include IED activity, will likely spike before and during election season.

		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	43	6	1	68	118
	Year	543	525	6	1701	2775
Event Count	Month	24	6	1	12	43
	Year	294	113	6	191	604

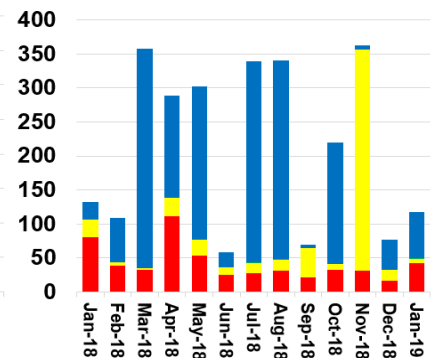
Past Year IED Event Casualty Count



Past Year IED Events by Type

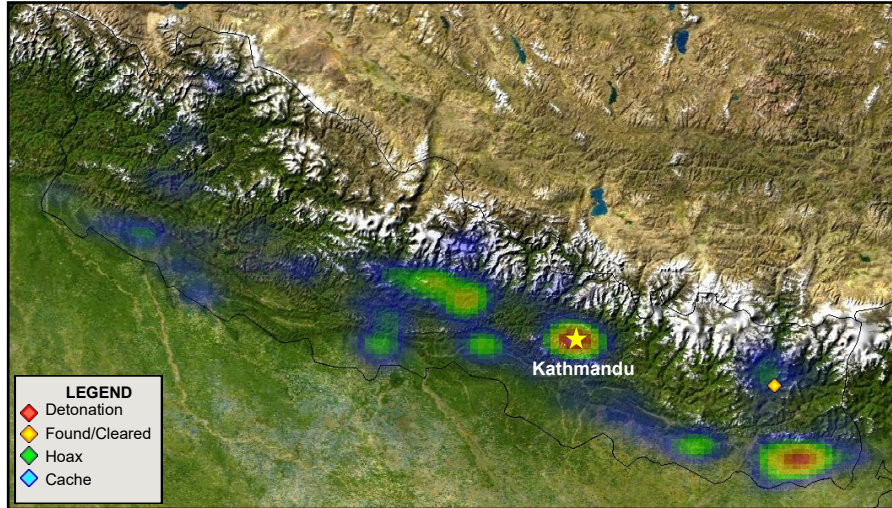


Past Year Devices



IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

# Nepal: January IED Events



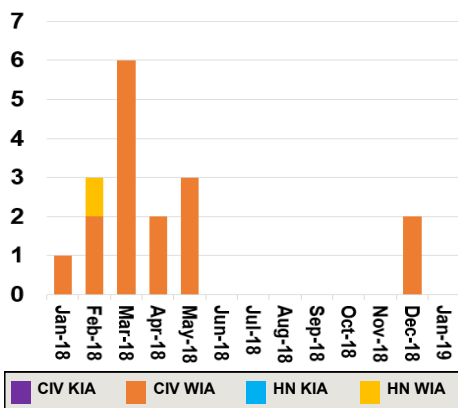
There was one IED found and cleared event.

On 4 JAN, local police and Nepal Army EOD found and cleared an IED along a road leading to a temple in Chainpur-7, Sankhuwasabha, Koshi. Authorities suspect the IED was a war remnant. **Insec Online (1/5/19)**

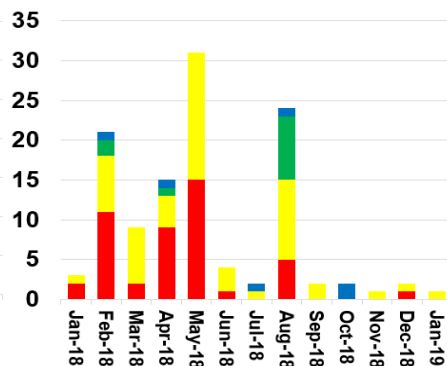
IED activity in Nepal remained low for the sixth month in a row. Following two years of increased activity, it appears IED levels are returning to their historical norms in the post-Civil War period. In the coming months, it is likely that IED activity will remain low.

		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	0	1	0	0	1
	Year	50	64	21	5	140
Event Count	Month	0	1	0	0	1
	Year	46	54	11	6	117

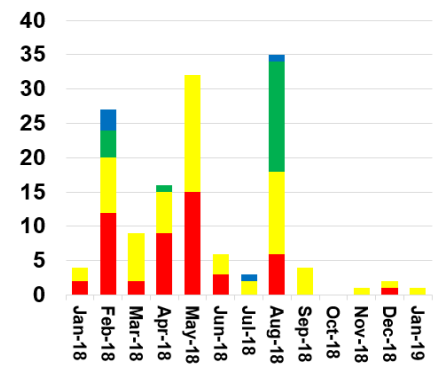
Past Year IED Event Casualty Count



Past Year IED Events by Type



Past Year Devices

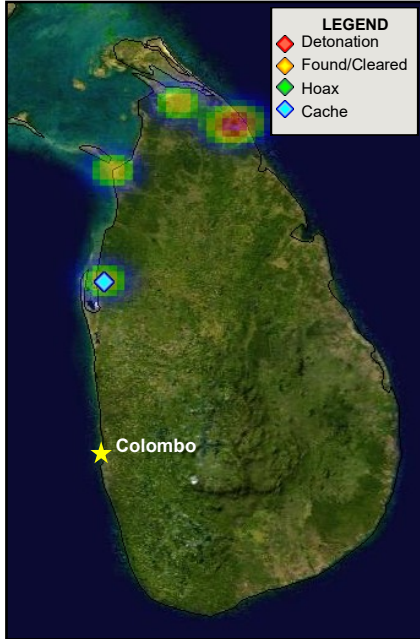


IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

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# Sri Lanka: January IED Events

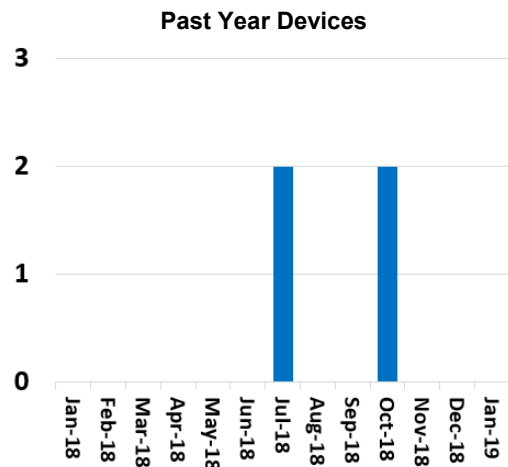
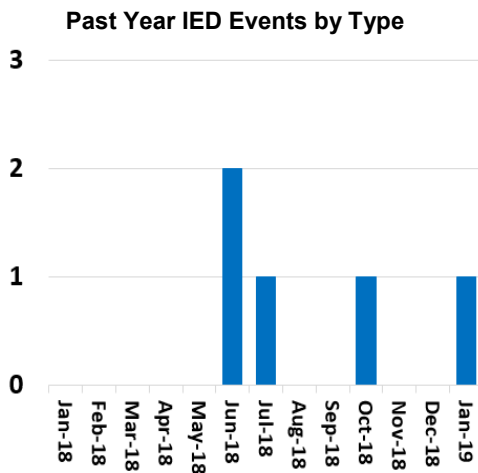


There was one IED cache event.

On 16 JAN, police found and cleared an IED cache in a coconut orchard in Lacktowatta, Wanathawilluwa, Puttalam. Police detained four suspects. Police were investigating the area for suspects involved in defacing Buddhist statues when they discovered the cache. The cache contained 100kg explosives, 100 detonators, 20 liters nitrate acid, wires, two firearms, ammunition, and personal articles. **Times Online (1/17/19) Daily Mirror (1/17/19) Hiru News (1/20/19)**

IED activity in Sri Lanka is rare, with the last event occurring in October 2018. It appears the 16 JAN event is an indicator of increasing inter-communal violence, specifically between Buddhist Sinhalese and Muslim groups. Inter-communal violence has occurred in Sri Lanka in the past, though it was previously between the Sinhalese and Tamils. Over the last year, violence in Sri Lanka between Buddhists and Muslims has increased, with several instances of property damage and assaults occurring. Recent instability in the government, mixed with a resurgent Sinhalese ethno-nationalist movement, potentially increasing conservatism in the Muslim community, and dissatisfaction over the handling of wartime atrocities could increase the likelihood that criminal and possibly militant activity will once again threaten Sri Lanka.

		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	0	0	0	0	0
	Year	0	0	0	4	4
Event Count	Month	0	0	0	1	1
	Year	0	0	0	5	5



IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

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# Southeast Asia: January Significant Activity

## Philippines

On 8 JAN, the first of two suspects responsible for the New Year's Eve Cotabato City mall bombing surrendered to the police after his family members saw his image captured on CCTV footage and posted on various media sources. Salipudin Pasandalan (53) claims his innocence, but CCTV showed him holding the backpack that contained the IED found at the baggage claim on the second floor of the mall after the first detonation. On 18 JAN, security forces apprehended the second suspect, Datu Mohalidin Usman (25) during a Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rally for the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL). Police have identified Usman as having ties to Commander Abu Toraife; leader of a Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) faction that has conducted similar attacks. Despite the BIFF denying any involvement in the attack that killed two and injured 30, police and military are combining efforts to discover if the BIFF has any association to the event. **PNA (1/8/19) INQUIRER (1/19/19)**

On 21 JAN, 2.1 million registered voters in Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Cotabato City and Isabela City voted on the inclusion of their provinces within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Surprisingly, Sulu was the only province to reject the plebiscite, but will still become a part of the new region due to an overwhelming majority in favor from the other provinces. Police and military remained on high alert leading up to the ratification, which resulted in minimal political violence. There were over 6,000 unarmed MILF members near voting polls, which both reassured and intimidated voters throughout the day. Authorities designed the BOL to address the grievances, sentiments, and demands of the Muslims in the region, which will officially begin after the final referendum on 6 FEB. **PNA (1/21/19) RAPPLER (1/21/19) ABS CBN (1/23/19)**

On 30 JAN, shortly after midnight, a grenade detonated after being thrown into a mosque in Zamboanga City, Zamboanga del Sur, killing two and injuring four civilians. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack and the motive is unknown, but the signature style is similar to previous attacks perpetrated by ASG. Although investigations are still underway to identify the culprits, there is currently no direct association between this event and the 27 JAN Jolo church bombing in Sulu Province. **al-Jazeera (1/29/19)**

## Thailand

In a media report released 16 JAN, the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) stated that it has appointed a new leader, Sama-ae Kho Zari (60), the BRN's secretary general. According to the Internal Security Operations Command (Isoc) Region 4, this change in command is evidence of the BRN's unwillingness to participate in peace talks with the Thai government. Sama-aw Kho Zari, a former Islamic teacher, has moved to live in the northern part of Kelantan, Malaysia. January's violence occurred under his new leadership. **Bangkok Post (1/16/19) Bangkok Post (1/20/19)**

On 18 JAN, insurgents and rangers exchanged small arms fire in Chanae, Narathiwat after officials confronted five militants in a rubber plantation located a few kilometers from Ban Teukor School. The rangers killed one suspected militant and wounded four others. **Bangkok Post (1/18/19)**

On 18 JAN, insurgents killed two Buddhist monks and injured two others with small arms during an attack Rattananuparb Buddhist temple in Sungai Padi, Narathiwat. The attack involved 10 militants dressed as soldiers on motorcycles. Attacks targeting Buddhist monks are not a common Southern Thai Insurgency TTP. **Chiang Rai Times (1/19/19) Bangkok Post (1/19/19) Bangkok Post (1/20/19)**

## Burma

On 4 JAN, hundreds of AA soldiers conducted a coordinated attack on four police posts in Buthidaung, Rahkine, killing 13 police officers and wounding nine. The attack coincided with the 71<sup>st</sup> Burmese Independence Day. According to an AA spokesperson, the AA soldiers attacked the posts because the Tatmadaw is using the police for military operations and were threatening local villagers. The AA captured 14 prisoners, but later released them. **Radio Free Asia (1/4/19) Relief Web (1/8/19)**

On 7 JAN, three landmines detonated in Yephyu, Tanintharyi in New Mon State Party (NMSP) controlled territory. A spokesperson from the NMSP stated that the one responsible for placing the mines intended on scaring locals. NMSP and Karen National Union (KNU) Forces have been active in the area. **BNI Online (1/9/19)**

## Indonesia

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# Southeast Asia: January Significant Activity

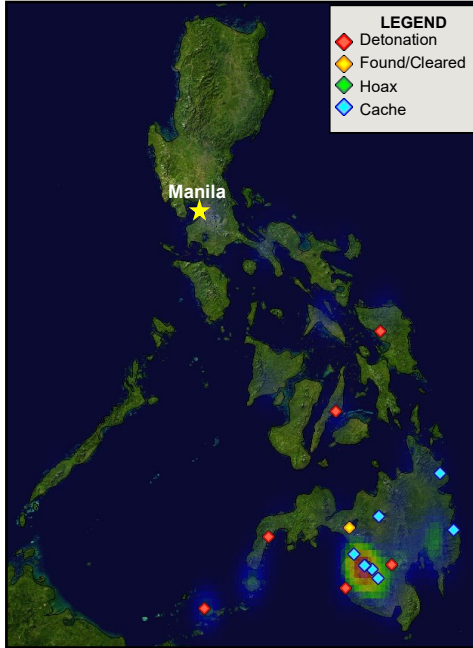
In early January, Indonesian officials announced they would extend Operation Tinombala until April 2019. The goal of the joint police-military operation is to hunt down the remaining members of the Mujahidin Indonesia Timur (MIT) VEO in the remote area of Poso, Sulawesi. Police believe the group's membership has likely doubled over the past month under the leadership of Ali Kalora. MIT has conducted dozens of shooting and bombing attacks in Poso, usually against the police, over its 9-year history. Their most recent attack involved the shooting and wounding two police officers assigned to Operation Tinombala on 31 DEC 2019. **Jakarta Post (1/15/19)**

## Malaysia

In late January, the Malaysian Defense Minister announced that they are preparing to develop a new defense "white paper;" the country's first major defense policy shift since 2010. Experts expect the paper to provide a 10-year blueprint for Malaysia's overall defense and security planning, as it tackles a rise in militant terror attacks in the region, and a growing cybersecurity threat. The Malaysian Parliament is expecting presentation of the paper in July 2019. **Arab News (2/2/19) Malaysiakini (1/10/19)**



# Philippines: January IED Events



There were seven IED detonation events, three IED found and cleared events, and eight IED cache events.

On 4 JAN, military forces discovered an IED cache in an abandoned New People's Army (NPA) facility after a tip-off in Lirongan, Talakag, Kukidon, Northern Mindanao, Mindanao. The cache contained blasting caps, batteries for an improvised explosive device (IED), two M16 Rifles, one M653 Rifle, one improvised M79 grenade launcher, one .45 caliber pistol, a M203 grenade, one rifle grenade, commercial radios, and subversive documents. **SUNSTAR (1/6/19)**

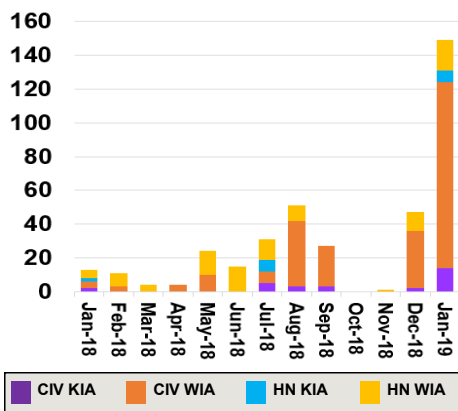
On 19 JAN, security forces found one IED near a main road in Macaguiling, Binidayan, Lanao del Sur, ARMM, Mindanao. The IED was wrapped in packaging tape with a red strip at the top of the bottle. **ABS-CBN (1/19/19)**

On 24 JAN, the NPA detonated an IED targeting a military patrol in Datu Ito Andong, Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat, SOCCSKSARGEN, Mindanao; two injured. A brief firefight erupted immediately following the detonation, which led the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Battalion Landing Team to pursue the NPA into the jungle. During recovery operations, authorities found and cleared one IED near the ambush site. **INQUIRER (1/25/19)**

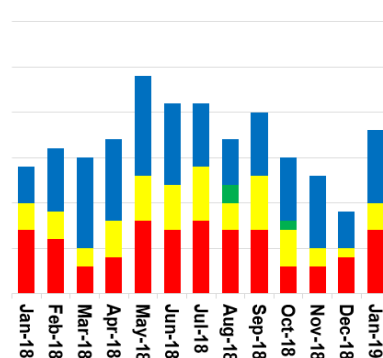
IED activity in January was slightly higher than December, with the majority of events being caches in the southern Philippines perpetrated equally by the NPA and BIFF. There were three specific events of election violence during the BOL plebiscite that targeted a governor, a mayor and a local police officer. There were no victims injured. The number of detonations increased slightly despite elevated security measures and operations taken to dismantle terror networks. It is likely that similar acts of violence may occur near Lanao del Norte during the region's voting preparation for the BOL referendum on 6 FEB.

		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	8	3	0	13	24
	Year	79	60	3	188	330
Event Count	Month	7	3	0	8	18
	Year	74	47	3	96	220

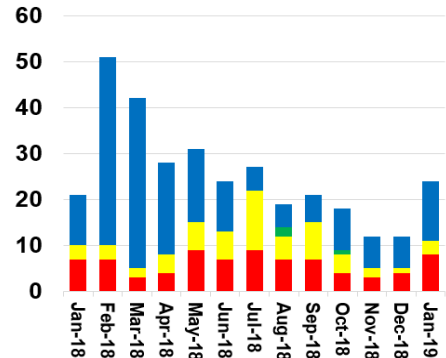
Past Year IED Event Casualty Count



Past Year IED Events by Type



Past Year Devices



IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

# Thailand: January IED Events



There were eight IED detonation events and one cache event.

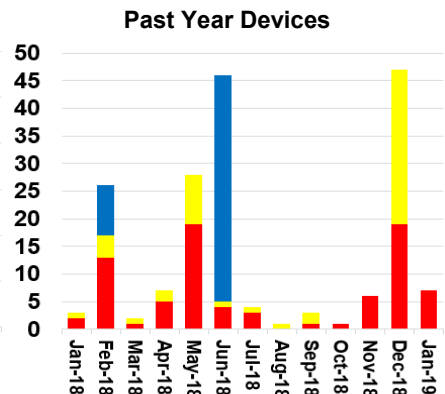
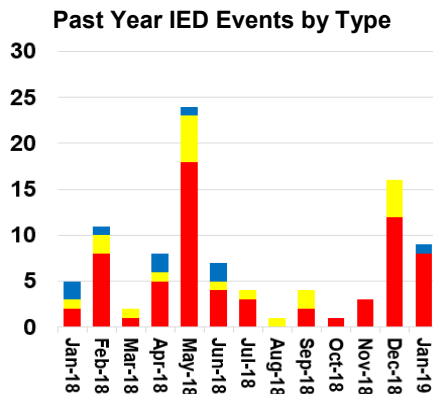
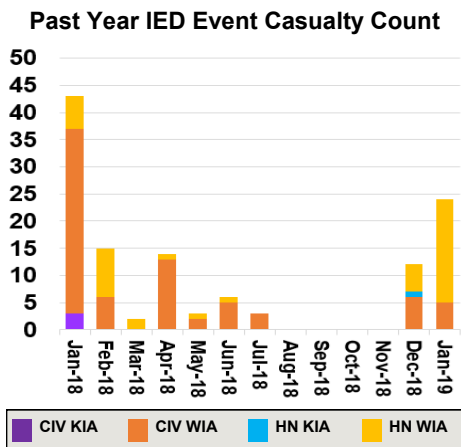
On 8 JAN, a 50kg timed VBIED consisting of two gas cylinders with cut iron bars for shrapnel detonated outside a Border Patrol Police task force base in Thepha, Songkhla injuring two soldiers. **Bangkok Post (1/8/19) The Nation (1/9/19)**

On 8 JAN, insurgents detonated an RCIED hidden under a plant pot along a road in Yarang, Pattani, killing one ranger and injuring one civilian. The blast caused a 40cm wide and 20cm deep hole. The rangers were providing morning security for teachers and students at a school. **Bangkok Post (1/8/19) The Nation (1/8/19)**

On 9 JAN, authorities recovered an IED cache in Saba Yoi, Songkhla and detained five suspected militants. They recovered the cache during the investigation into the 8 JAN Songkhla VBIED attack. The cache contained mobile phone circuits, electronic components, and steel rods. **Bangkok Post (1/10/19)**

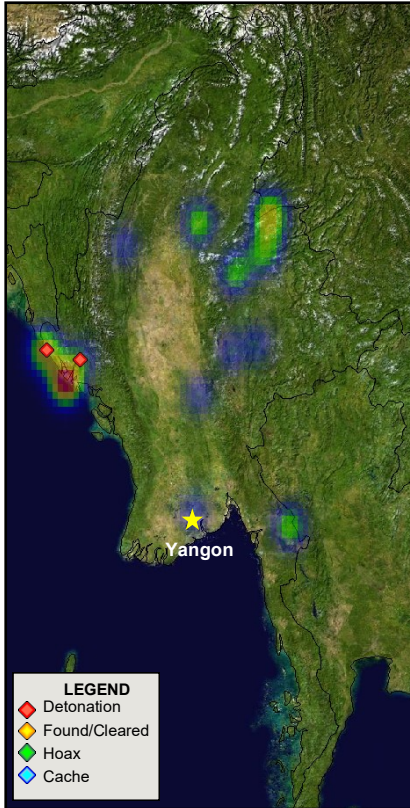
IED activity and overall violence in southern Thailand was higher in January than previous months. Though overall violence has decreased since 2016, this is not necessarily an indication that insurgent groups are weakening (particularly the BRN). The increase in violence attributed to the BRN could be the result of a negative response towards Thai and Malaysian officials pressuring the BRN to participate in negotiations, or it could be a show of force under the newly appointed BRN leader, Sama-ae Kho Zari (**see SEA SIGACTs**). Escalating violence this month may serve as an indicator for future violence, particularly as militants continue to express their dissatisfaction towards the Thai government.

		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	7	0	0	0	7
	Year	81	50	0	50	181
Event Count	Month	8	0	0	1	9
	Year	67	19	0	9	95



IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

# Burma: January IED Events



There were two IED detonation events.

On 1 JAN, three RCIEDs detonated simultaneously, targeting a convoy transporting the Rakhine Chief Minister, U Nyi Pu. This is the second attempted attack on this government official. In December 2017, a roadside mine detonated after his motorcade passed the device. **The Irrawaddy (1/2/19) Eleven (1/2/19) Myanmar Times (1/3/19) Myanmar ITV (1/2/9)**

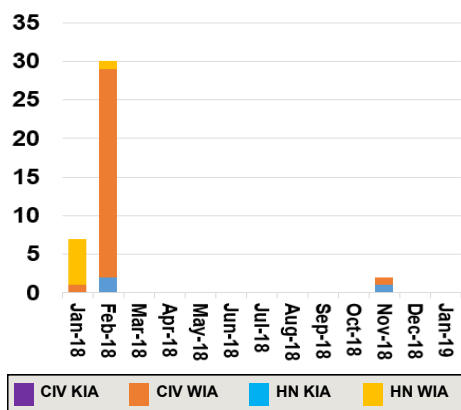
On 3 JAN, an unknown bomb detonated in Thetpyikya village, Ponnakyun, Rakhine, injuring four individuals. It is not clear if the device was conventional or improvised. **Radio Free Asia (1/15/19)**

On 16 JAN, 10 Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) insurgents detonated a pipe bomb during an ambush of a vehicle transporting security forces from the No. 2 Border Guard Police Headquarters in Maungdaw, Rakhine; six police officers injured. **YouTube (1/19/19) The Irrawaddy (1/17/19) The Irrawaddy (1/20/19) Reuters (1/19/19)**

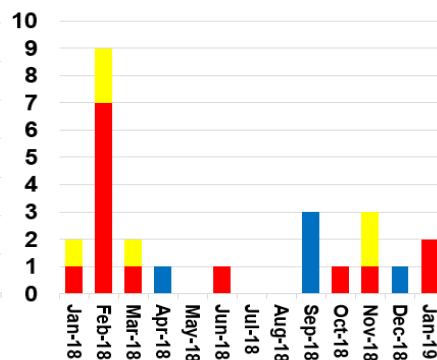
Burma's IED activity remained low in January, with violence isolated to the Rakhine region. Most notably this month was the resumption of attacks executed by ARSA. In August 2017, ARSA conducted a coordinated attack on police posts, resulting in a harsh military crackdown, which forced over 700,000 Rohingya to flee to neighboring Bangladesh. Following, the number of attacks attributed to ARSA declined as pressure on the group reduced its strength. The last reported IED attack perpetrated by ARSA was the 5 JAN 2018 RCIED detonation targeting a military vehicle. The recent complex attack on 16 JAN indicates that the militant group has maintained a foothold in the Rakhine state. It is likely that IED activity will increase in the coming months if the Tatmadaw continues its military operations in the region.

		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	4	0	0	0	4
	Year	17	17	0	1	35
Event Count	Month	2	0	0	0	2
	Year	14	6	0	5	25

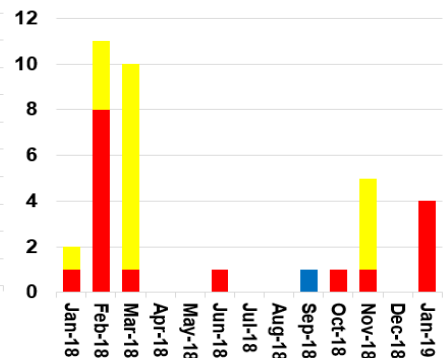
Past Year IED Event Casualty Count



Past Year IED Events by Type

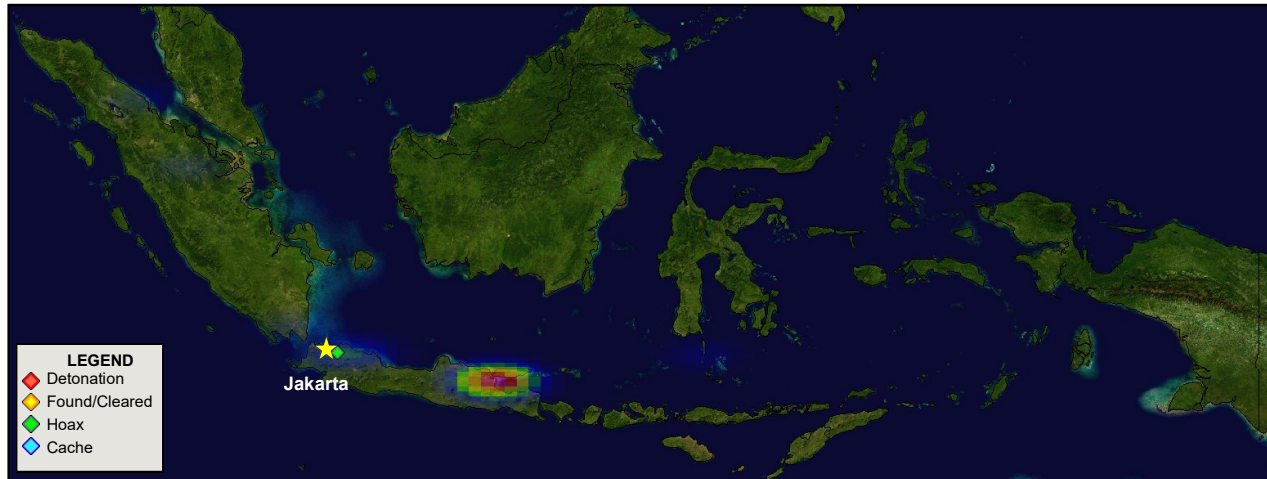


Past Year Devices



IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

# Indonesia: January IED Events



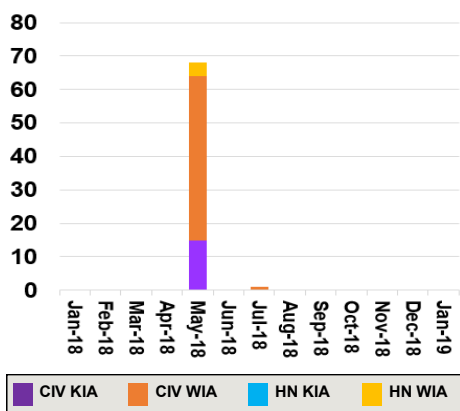
There was one IED hoax event.

On 9 JAN, police cleared a hoax IED emplaced in front of a government official's home in Bekasi, West Java. The housekeeper of the official's home alerted the police after discovering a suspicious object (a backpack) hanging from the home's fence. The hoax device, concealed in a backpack, consisted of a plastic pipe bomb containing a detonator, wires, nail enhancements, and cement mix posing as the main explosive charge. **Tribun News (1/9/19) Tribun News (1/10/19)**

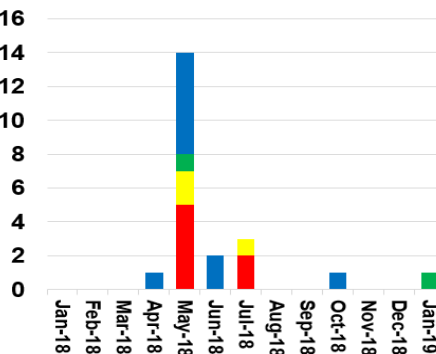
IED activity remained low in Indonesia for the eighth month in a row. The 9 JAN hoax IED event is likely politically motivated violence and not VEO-connected terrorism. The government official whose home was targeted, Agus Rahardjo, is the chairman of Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK). On the same day of the hoax IED event, around 0100 local time, perpetrators threw two Molotov cocktails at the home of the deputy chairman of the KPK, Laode Syarif, in Kalibata, South Jakarta. The KPK's effectiveness in investigating major public corruption cases has prompted numerous acts of violence and intimidation over its 17-year history. Past acts of intimidation include bomb threats, bombings, acid attacks, robbery, kidnapping, and attempted murder.

		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	0	0	1	0	1
	Year	12	8	2	152	174
Event Count	Month	0	0	1	0	1
	Year	7	3	2	10	22

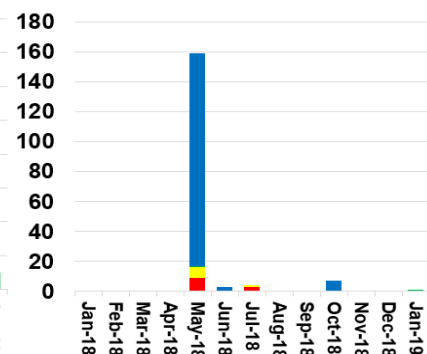
Past Year IED Event Casualty Count



Past Year IED Events by Type



Past Year Devices



IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

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# Malaysia: January IED Events



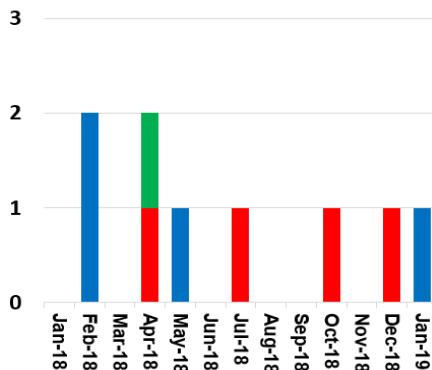
There was one IED cache event.

On 27 JAN, police recovered an IED cache following a series of raids in Kota Belud, Sabah; authorities detained six suspects (five Malaysians and one Filipino). The cache contained two sets of fish bombs, seven boxes of detonators, six wires, two plastic containers believed to be holding ammonium nitrate, a number of empty plastic bottles believed to be fish bomb containers, a wooden boat, one ship, two engines, a compass and GPS, and Malaysian currency (USD 539). **Bharian Online (1/28/19)**

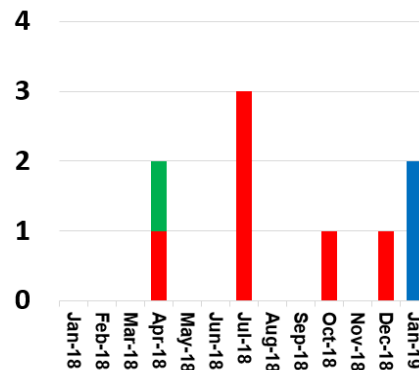
IED activity in Malaysia remains consistently low. Malaysia's IED events are typically of a criminal nature, such as the 27 JAN event involving fishermen who were involved in blast fishing activities. This illegal fishing technique is a pervasive and common practice throughout Southeast Asia. Blast fishing devices usually consist of an ammonium nitrate fuel oil (ANFO) main charge, a non-electric detonator, a waterproof time fuse, and a small glass or plastic bottle container.

		Detonation	Found/Cleared	Hoax	Cache	Total
Device Count	Month	0	0	0	2	2
	Year	6	0	1	2	9
Event Count	Month	0	0	0	1	1
	Year	4	0	1	4	9

Past Year IED Events by Type



Past Year Devices



IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

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# Northeast Asia: January Significant Activity

## China

In January 2019, reports surfaced that Chinese authorities had shuttered three mosques in Yunnan Province. Officials closed all three mosques, located near Weishan City and belonging to Hui Muslims, because they were conducting, according to Chinese officials, “illegal religious education.” Although Hui protestors confronted police officers, the police were able to lock and chain the doors. The Weishan County Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee conducted the closure to “protect harmony and stability in the religious domain.” Of the 10 million Hui Muslims in China, an estimated 700,000 live in Yunnan Province. The closures come as a part of the new five-year “Sinicization” program that Chinese authorities just announced. The Chinese state newspaper, *The Global Times*, clearly stated the goal of the program: “China will soon release an outline on the sinicization of Islam, with Islamic communities urged to uphold the sinicization of their religion by improving their political stance and following the [ruling Chinese Communist] Party’s leadership.” Chinese Muslim activists state that sinicization denotes the erasure of their ethnic and religious identities. **Anadolu Agency (1/1/19) Radio Free Asia (1/7/19)**

On 22 JAN, Hong Kong police recovered a commercial cache from a shipping container yard in Lok Ma Chau, Hong Kong and detained one suspect. The cache contained 1.1 tons of illegal fireworks, likely smuggled from the mainland ahead of Lunar New Year festivities. Both the quantity and the relative lack of safety in storing such a large amount of explosives in a shipping container raised authorities’ concerns. According to police, this was the largest cache of illegal fireworks seized in recent years. **South China Morning Post (1/23/19)**

## Japan

On 1 JAN, in the early hours after midnight, a 21-year old man drove his rental car through a crowded street of pedestrians in Harajuku district, Tokyo, injuring eight. After driving about 130 meters, he abandoned the car and fled, but police apprehended him in a nearby park about 20 minutes later. Kazuhiro Kusakabe stated after his arrest that he committed the crime, “in retaliation for an execution.” He did not state if he was protesting a specific execution or Japan’s death penalty. Japanese authorities most recently used the death penalty in the summer of 2018, when they executed 13 members of the cult Aum Shinrikyo (also known as Aleph). He later stated his desire to “commit terrorism” and that he was protesting the death sentence of the Aum Shinrikyo members. Police also found a container with 20 liters of kerosene and a pressure washer in his car. He stated that he had tried to enter the nearby Meiji Shrine, a major shrine where thousands of Japanese go for New Year’s blessings, but authorities prevented him from driving his car onto the shrine grounds. He stated that he wanted to use the kerosene and washer as a homemade flamethrower to kill people at the shrine, but could not get the device to function properly, so he then decided to ram people on the street with his car. Kusakabe stated that he would have committed other terrorist acts if he had escaped. **Straits Times (1/5/19) Mainichi (1/3/19)**

In January, some 18 businesses in Japan received threatening letters, some signed with names of executed Aum Shinrikyo cult members. The letters, containing white powder suspected to be cyanide, contained a singular message to pay USD 31,200 (35 million South Korean Won) worth of Bitcoin by 22 FEB, or the perpetrators would make and distribute medicine laced with cyanide poison. The letters arrived at pharmaceutical companies across three cities and at least two newspapers. A similar incident occurred last year. **Japan Times (1/29/19) Japan Today (1/27/19)**

## Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

On 13 JAN, state media published North Korean leader Kim Jong-un’s (KJU) New Year’s address, providing insight into the country’s plans for the upcoming year. In this year’s address, KJU stated that joint military exercises with foreign forces aggravate the situation on the Korean Peninsula and “should no longer be permitted.” Although he declined to mention the United States specifically, it was clear which foreign force he was considering an aggravation. He added, “The introduction of war equipment, including strategic assets from outside, should completely be suspended.” After the speech, the government released propaganda posters supporting KJU’s goals. These included new posters depicting the removal of foreign militaries from the peninsula and the advent of peace and prosperity in a new unified peninsula. **NK News (1/14/19)**

# IED Calendar

The IED calendar was established to help our audience maintain awareness of events, such as anniversaries of major attacks, or political, religious or cultural events that often coincide (or can potentially coincide) with a spike in IED events.

**4 JAN (BUR):** Independence Day

**26 JAN (IND):** Republic Day

**Late January to early February (WW):** Attacks have coincided with the anniversary of worldwide protests to Danish Cartoons in 2006

**28 FEB (THA):** First peace agreement signed between Thai Government and southern insurgents

**12 MAR (IND):** Anniversary of 1993 Mumbai attack

**13 MAR (THA):** Anniversary of the founding of the Barisan Revolusi Nasional

**15-16 MAR (IND):** United Liberation Front of Assam Army Raising Day

**29 MAR (PHL):** Anniversary of the founding of the New People's Army

IND – India  
PHL – Philippines  
BUR – Burma  
THA – Thailand  
WW – Worldwide

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
January 2019	30	31	1	2	3	4 BUR	5
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20 WW	21 WW	22 WW	23 WW	24 WW	25 WW	26 WW IND
	27 WW	28 WW	29 WW	30 WW	31 WW	1 WW	2 WW
February 2019	3 WW	4 WW	5 WW	6 WW	7 WW	8 WW	9 WW
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25	26	27	28 THA	1	2
March 2019	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10	11	12 IND	13 THA	14	15 IND	16 IND
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25	26	27	28	29 PHL	30
	31	1	2	3	4	5	6

# Common Terms and Acronyms

AN – Ammonium Nitrate	PN – Partner Nation
ANFO – Ammonium Nitrate Fuel Oil	PPIED – Pressure Plate IED
ARMM – Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao	QRF – Quick Response Force
CIV – Civilian	RCIED – Radio Controlled IED
CBRN – Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear	RCP – Route Clearance Patrols
COIN – Counter-insurgency	RPG – Rocket Propelled Grenade
CWIED – Command Wire IED	SA – South Asia
DTMF – Dual-Tone Multi-Frequency	SAF – Small Arms Fire
EFP – Explosively Formed Projectile	SEA – Southeast Asia
EOD – Explosive Ordnance Disposal	SVBIED – Suicide Vehicle Borne IED
F/C – Found & Cleared	TATP – Triacetone Triperoxide
HME – Homemade Explosives	TNT – Trinitrotoluene (C <sub>7</sub> H <sub>5</sub> N <sub>3</sub> O <sub>6</sub> )
HN – Host Nation (Police, Military, Government)	TTP – Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
IDF – Indirect Fire	UXO – Unexploded Ordnance
IDP – Internally Displaced Persons	VBIED – Vehicle Borne IED
IED – Improvised Explosive Device	VEO – Violent Extremist Organization
KFR – Kidnap for Ransom	VOIED – Victim Operated IED
KIA – Killed in Action	WIA – Wounded in Action
LOC – Line of Communication	
LPG – Liquefied Petroleum Gas	
MSR – Main Supply Routes	
NFI – No Further Information	
NSTR – Nothing Significant To Report	
PBA – Post Blast Analysis	
PBIED – Personnel Borne (Suicide Bomb) IED	
PCB – Printed Circuit Board	

# Governments, Groups and Organizations

ASG – Abu Sayyaf Group	JMB – Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh
BIFF – Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters	JMJB – Jama'atul Muslim Janta Bangladesh
BIPP – Barisan Islam Perberbasan Patani	KIA – Kachin Independence Army
BRN-C – Barisan Revolusi Nasional-Coordinate	KIM – Khalifa Islamiya Mindanao
BSF – Border Security Forces	KIO – Kachin Independence Organization
BNP – Bangladesh National Party	LeT – Lashkar-e Tayyiba
BriMob – Mobile Brigade (Indonesia CT Forces)	MILF – Moro Islamic Liberation Front
CPI-M – Communist Party of India (Maoist)	MILF-SOG – MILF-Special Operations Group
CPN-M – Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)	MNLF – Moro National Liberation Front
CPP – Communist Party of the Philippines	NPA – New People's Army
CRPF – Central Reserve Police Force (India)	PNP – Philippine National Police
GMIP – Gerakan Mujahideen Islam Patani	POLRI – Indonesian National Police
HM – Hizb-ul-Mujahideen	PULO – Patani United Liberation Organization
HNLC – Hynniewtre National Liberation Council (India)	RAB – Rapid Action Battalion (Bangladesh)
HUJI-B – Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami Bangladesh	RKK – Runda Kumpulan Kecil
IB – India's Intelligence Bureau	SJMM – Samyukta Jatiya Mukti Morcha
IM – Indian Mujahideen	SJTMM – Samyukta Jana Tantrik Terai Mukti Morcha
IrW – Irregular Warfare	ULFA – United Liberation Front of Assam
ISI – Inter-Services Intelligence (Pakistan)	UWSA – United Wa State Army
ISIS – Islamic State of Iraq ash Sham	YCL – Youth Communist League
JAT – Jemaah Ansharout Tauhid	
JI – Jemaah Islamiya	
JTMM – Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha	
JIB – Jemaat-e-Islami Bangladesh	
JeM – Jaish-e-Mohammed	